

Dragonshards

The Reach of Riedra, Part One

By Keith Baker



Mysteries surround the nation of Riedra. Most people of Khorvaire have heard only vague and contradictory stories of Riedra: All wizards and sorcerers are put to death. Sorcerers rule the land. Demons rule the land. Gold covers the streets and no one ever goes hungry... or the people starve in huts of mud and straw.

If you've read the *Eberron Campaign Setting*, you know the true nature of the Inspired and the goals of the Dreaming Dark. But that puts you far ahead of the average citizen of Khorvaire. So, what do people know about Riedra? What roles can Riedrans play in your campaign? And given the supreme subtlety of the Dreaming Dark, how can you actually USE it?

First Contact

When the Inspired rose to power in Riedra, they cut off all contact between Sarlona and Khorvaire. For a thousand years Riedra has been hidden from the outside world. To this day, most civilized regions are shielded from divination. An adventurer who researches the matter will find that a surprising number of wizards and inquisitives who sought to pierce the mysteries of Riedra have gone mad -- typically driven to distraction by terrible nightmares. Ships that sought harbor at Riedra were turned away. Explorers who sought to pierce the veil of secrecy never returned. The Riedrans took no aggressive action, but they wanted no part of the outside world.

Centuries later, ships of House Lyrandar and the Galifar navy encountered Riedran vessels in the Thunder Sea and the Barren Sea. The Riedrans established settlements on Xen'drik long before the people of Khorvaire, and the pirates who built the foundations of Stormreach preyed on Riedran shipping. Through Stormreach, they established the first basis of trade, dealing in spices, alchemical solutions, fine textiles, and other exotic goods. Foreigners could not set foot in Riedra, and the Inspired did not send ambassadors to the court of Galifar. But a few small Riedran communities appeared in the major port cities of Galifar, managing the shipping trade for their homeland.

It took the Last War and the fall of Galifar to bring the Inspired to Khorvaire. When the war had passed its first decade, delegations of Inspired appeared in the courts of the newly independent Five Nations. Beautiful and charming, these strangers offered their aid to the war-torn kingdoms. The medicines supplied (for a fair price, of course) by Riedra helped to ease the strain on House

What Do You Know?

Knowledge (geography)

DC 10: Riedra is the largest nation on the continent of Sarlona. Riedra is a sprawling realm that includes all types of terrain.

DC 15: The Riedrans are xenophobes who avoid contact with the outside world. Riedra has recently sent ambassadors to Khorvaire, but foreigners are still unwelcome in Riedra.

DC 20: Members of the ruling class of Riedra are known as the Inspired. The Riedrans believe that the Inspired are guided by divine powers, and these princes are treated as living gods.

This information is also available with a DC 25 Knowledge (nobility and royalty) check, which will also reveal the name of the local Inspired ambassador.

Knowledge (history)

DC 15: Human civilization began in Sarlona. Humanity began to explore Khorvaire

Jorasco. The Inspired often served as neutral mediators, impressing kings and queens with their wisdom and charisma. Foodstuffs from Riedra helped limit the impact of Karrnath's famine. Slowly but surely, the Inspired and their servants spread across Khorvaire.

Riedrans in the Modern World

Today, Inspired ambassadors live in every metropolis and in many of the large cities of Khorvaire. Most ports have small Riedran communities. Cityfolk see Riedrans on the streets and the docks, dressed in the simple clothing of their homeland and speaking in the Riedran tongue. As a rule the Riedrans are quiet and insular, keeping to themselves and abstaining from most vices. Riedran goods are becoming more common on the streets. Virin is a beverage made from Sarlonan roots that eases fatigue. Jorasco houses often make use of Riedran healing herbs. And on the more sordid side of things, the sale of dreamily -- an addictive narcotic originally brought over for medicinal purposes -- has become a major industry in the underworld of Khorvaire.

In the upper echelons of society, the Riedrans have been gaining influence. The Inspired have access to vast mineral and agricultural resources, along with the prosperity that comes from a thousand years of order. The Riedrans have been providing generous material aid to all of the Five Nations, helping repair the terrible damages of the Last War. This also allows the rulers of the nations to maintain their pride: It's easier for Kaius to get grain from the Inspired than to have to beg Aundair for assistance. King Sebastes of Q'barra is currently receiving military support from Riedra; the Inspired have established garrisons in the region around Newthrone to help defend the settlers from lizardfolk attacks. Other leaders may be considering this; if war looms anew, Aundair could seek Riedran aid to defend itself from the larger armies of Thrane or Karrnath -- a desperate move, perhaps, but Aurala may be swayed by dreams of the power such an alliance might bring!

Kings and queens are not the only people who deal with the Inspired. While the Riedran community tends to stay out of sight, Inspired ambassadors and their staff are active in their communities; exotic and clever, these beautiful strangers fascinate the upper crust of Khorvaire. In the city of Sharn, Ambassador Jorasesh often gives impromptu lectures at Morgrave University; both Jorasesh and his aide Helkashtai attend all of the major galas and social events of the city. The Inspired are seen as impartial outsiders, but also respected for their apparent wisdom and empathy, and they often provide advice or serve as mediators in local disputes.

approximately three thousand years ago, led by the pioneer Lhazaar.

DC 25: Many kingdoms and empires once covered Sarlona. About 1,500 years ago, the Inspired unified these warring states.

Knowledge (psionics)

DC 10: The continent of Sarlona is the center of psionic knowledge. Both the kalashtar and the Inspired have a natural talent for psionics, and many of the psions of Khorvaire have learned the art from a Sarlonan teacher.

DC 20: The Sarlonans use relatively little magic in everyday life, but psionics are used to accomplish many of the same tasks that magic is used for in Khorvaire.

Knowledge (the planes)

DC 15: The quori are the natives of Dal Quor, the Region of Dreams. Quori spirits cannot manifest physically on the Material Plane.

DC 20: Quori spirits typically possess mental powers relating to a specific emotion, such as fear or rage. They can interfere with the dreams of mortals, creating horrible nightmares.

DC 25: While quori spirits cannot manifest physically on Eberron, they can possess willing humans.

DC 25: The Inspired have a strong connection to Dal Quor. Some believe that they deal regularly with quori spirits -- or even allow these spirits to possess their bodies in exchange for power.

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Next: So what does this mean for you?

About the Author

Keith Baker has been an avid fan of **Dungeons & Dragons** since grade school. His life took a dramatic turn in 2002 when he submitted the world of Eberron to the Wizards of the Coast Fantasy Setting Search. In addition to developing the **Eberron** Campaign Setting and *Shadows of the Last War*, he has worked for Atlas Games, Goodman Games, and Green Ronin.

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